GEOGRAPHY 165 -- REGIONAL INTELLIGENCE

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Every day a great deal of "regional" information is gathered and published, in one form or another. The regional "context" of the information is that element which gives it pertinence. That is to say, information concerning wheat production in China or Turkestan is a good deal more "newsworthy" than similar information for the United States or Australia; and estimates of the political situation in Tibet may cause greater interest than similar estimates for Norway. The "significance indicator" drifts from place to place the world over, depending upon the shifting whims of international interest.

Most of our government agencies devote some of their efforts to one form or another of "regional intelligence" -- that is to say, keeping up with developments pertinent to their interests the world around. The purpose of this course is to show broadly what these interests are and why they exist, to indicate the unclassified sources of information available to the regional specialist, to show how information of a diverse and complex nature can be appropriately collected and "stored", and to exemplify systems of analysis of regional information. In other words, within the limits of time and security, it is intended here to demonstrate how some branches of the federal government use applied geography -- whether they call it by that or another name.

The following is a very general outline of the course.

PART I -- Objectives of Regional Intelligence. (4 lectures)

> The kinds of information we normally want about other places in the world are probably best categorized in terms of:
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> > Economic intelligence: industrial and agricultural production data; resource potentials; labor; etc. (1)
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> > Political intelligence: internal conflicts; loyalty of the people; forecasts of trends; stability; etc. (1)
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> > Military intelligence: terrain intelligence; operational planning information; estimates of strength; etc. (2)
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> (Actually, cultural intelligence is also highly important for such areas as psychological warfare, planning international conferences.)

PART II - Information Sources (6 lectures)

> Sources of information will all be of an unclassified nature, of course. In general, information will come from published sources, maps, and aerial photographs.
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> > Published sources: particularly important is a discussion of standard statistical information -- the UN Statistical Yearbook, Demographic Yearbook, the Statesman's Yearbook, etc. Equally important is the coverage given statistical information by various agencies of the U. S. government and the periodic self-reports of most governments.

Beyond this, reference should be made to English-language journals with particularly pertinent regional reports. There is probably very little point in covering foreign language journals.

A bibliography (preferably briefly annotated) should be given the students. (2)

Maps: first, a general statement of the types (subject matter) and scales of up-to-date maps normally available, and from what sources. Second, a "laboratory" period demonstrating some methods of map analysis, evaluation of map data, etc. (2)

Aerial photographs: a discussion of the general availability (and cost) of photographs, together with some broad picture of recent world coverage. This should be followed by a demonstration of some methods of photo-analysis: actually, this will amount to a very brief "course" in photo-geography. (2)

PART III--Systems for collecting and storing information (2 lectures)

This amounts to an examination of ways in which tremendous amounts of data can be collected for optimum usefulness.

Systems of classification: field notation, coding, etc.

Systems of storing: the use of various sorts of storage devices, and their utility and limitations: simple open-end files, punch cards, tape, etc.

PART IV - Systems of processing and analyzing data (2 lectures)

Processing organized according to the normal "needs" of a specific office. Involves identification of major questions.

Types of analysis: relationships (tests of correlation, Chi Square); deviations (standard and average deviation); trends

✓ PART V -- Methods of reporting (1 lecture)

Nature of the regional study: organization, language, illustrations.

Systems and problems of "summarization"

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The content of regional intelligence as roughly defined above is just about the same as that outlined by Kent (STRATEGIC INTELLIGENCE, by Sherman Kent, Princeton University Press, 1949) in what he refers to as Positive Intelligence. The main categories of subject matter he lists are as follows: personalities, military, political, economic, social, moral, scientific and technical, and learning and the arts. This is perhaps a little inclusive for our purposes in this course.